

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

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S E C R E T JIDDA 2614

EXDIS

EO 11652: GDS

TAGS: MASS, SA

SUBJECT: SAUDI INTEREST IN PURCHASING ADDITIONAL F-5 E' S

REF: JIDDA 2613

1. TEXT OF LETTER DATED JUNE 5 FROM NORTHROP VICE
PRESIDENT C. R. GATES TO MINDEF PRINCE SULTAN FOLLOWS:

2. QUOTE YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS, MR. T. V. JONES AND I
WERE HONORED TO HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY OF MEETING WITH
YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS IN GENEVA ON MAY 21 (DATE UNCLEAR
IN COPY). THE DISCUSSION WAS MOST USEFUL TO US IN
BETTER UNDERSTANDING YOUR NEEDS FOR THE RSAF.

3. QUOTE IT HAS BEEN OUR UNDERSTANDING THAT THE RSAF REQUIRE-
MENT FOR THE F-5 E AMOUNTS TO AN ADDITIONAL 70 AIRCRAFT,
OVER AND ABOVE THE 30 F-5 E' S ALREADY BEING PRODUCED.
IN OUR MEETING YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS CONFIRMED THAT YOU
WOULD LIKE TO PROCEED IMMEDIATELY ON THE NEXT 20 F-5 E' S,
AND WOULD LIKE TO RECEIVE THEM AS SOON AS POSSIBLE,
HOPEFULLY WITH OR CLOSELY FOLLOWING THE DELIVERY
OF THE FIRST 30 AIRCRAFT.

4. QUOTE AS WE INDICATED TO YOU, EVEN WITH THE RAPID
PRODUCTION BUILD- UP, THERE ARE NO ADDITIONAL F-5 E' S
AVAILABLE UNTIL JANUARY 1976. ALL OF THE F-5 E' S BEING
PRODUCED UNTIL THAT TIME ARE ALREADY COMMITTED.

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5. QUOTE IT IS POSSIBLE THAT SOME DELIVERIES COULD BE MADE IN 1975, IF U. S GOVERNMENT APPROVAL IS OBTAINED, AND IF ADDITIONAL FUNDING FOR TOLLING FOR A HIGHER PRODUCTION RATE IS PROVIDED. IN ORDER FOR THIS TO HAVE A POSSIBILITY OF OCCURRING, A FIRM AGREEMENT IS NEEDED BETWEEN THE GOVERNMENTS OF SAUDI ARABIA AND THE UNITED STATES BY JULY 1, 1973.

6. QUOTE AS FAR AS THE REMAINING 50 OF THE 70 AIRCRAFT ARE CONCERNED, THESE F-5 E' S CAN BE DELIVERED BEGINNING IN EARLY 1976. IN ORDER FOR THIS TO OCCUR, AN AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE TWO GOVERNMENTS WOULD BE NEEDED BY THE END OF 1973.

7. QUOTE IT IS IMPORTANT THAT THIS ACTION BE TAKEN WITHIN THE NEXT FEW MONTHS TO INSURE EARLY 1976 DELIVERY TO THE RSAF. IN ORDER TO ASSURE THE LOWEST PRICE AND UNINTERRUPTED DELIVERIES, IT WOULD BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE SAUDI GOVERNMENT TO COMMIT TO THE TOTAL OF 70 AIRCRAFT, RATHER THAN IN SEPARATE LOTS OF 20 AND 50.

8. QUOTE I HOPE THAT THIS CLARIFIES NORTHROP' S POSITION WITH REGARD TO POSSIBLE DELIVERIES OF FUTURE QUANTITIES OF F-5 E' S. WE ARE MOST DESIROUS OF DOING EVERYTHING POSSIBLE IN SUPPORT OF YOUR ROYAL HIGHNESS' PLANS TO UP- GRADE THE RSAF. RESPECTFULLY YOURS, C. R. GATES, VICE PRESIDENT - INTERNATIONAL. UNQUOTE.
THCHER

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** EXDIS

*** Current Classification *** SECRET

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